

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 CIAE-00 COME-00 EB-08 INR-10
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R 271726Z APR 78
FM AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6293
INFO ALL EC CAPITALS
USMISSION GENEVA

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USEEC, ALSO FOR USDEL MTN GENEVA

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TAGS: ELAB, EEC, EAID, ETRD
SUBJ: LABOR GROUPS PROMOTING "SOCIAL DIMENSION" IN LOME II
REF: (A) BRUSSELS 7699; (B) BRUSSELS 3153; (C) BRUSSELS
2739; (D) BRUSSELS 2150

1. SUMMARY: THE 40 MILLION-MEMBER EUROPEAN TRADE UNION
CONFEDERATION (ETUC) IS STEPPING UP EFFORTS TO ENSURE THAT
A "SOCIAL DIMENSION" IS CONTAINED IN THE NEW TRADE AND
AID AGREEMENT BETWEEN THE EC AND 53 AFRICAN, CARIBBEAN,
AND PACIFIC (ACP) COUNTRIES WHICH WILL REPLACE THE PRESENT
LOME CONVENTION WHEN IT EXPIRES IN MARCH 1980. END SUM-
MARY.

2. ETUC OFFICIALS PRIVATELY TAKE SOME OF THE CREDIT FOR
PERSUADING THE EC COMMISSION TO INCLUDE POINTS ON HUMAN
RIGHTS AND INTERNATIONAL LABOR STANDARDS IN ITS PROPOSED
GUIDELINES FOR RENEGOTIATION OF THE LOME CONVENTION (REF
B). SINCE THE GUIDELINES ARE STILL BEING CONSIDERED BY
THE EC COUNCIL, THE ETUC'S OBJECTIVE IS TO MAKE SURE THAT
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THE "SOCIAL" POINTS ARE APPROVED, AND ARE SPELLED OUT IN
MEANINGFUL LANGUAGE.

3. THE ETUC EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE HAS APPOINTED A SPECIAL
"LOME II" SUBCOMMITTEE TO DRAFT A POLICY STATEMENT
COVERING IN DETAIL WHAT THE ETUC HAS IN MIND. THE
SUBCOMMITTEE MET ON APRIL 20 WITH REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
GERMAN DGB, DANISH LO, FRENCH CFDT, BELGIAN CSC, AND THE

ITALIAN CGIL-UIL-CISL (ONE PERSON FROM EACH), AS WELL AS MEMBERS OF THE ETUC SECRETARIAT, IN ATTENDANCE.

4. ACCORDING TO AN ETUC SOURCE, THE SUBCOMMITTEE DRAFT WILL DEVELOP THE ETUC'S CASE FOR PROTECTING LABOR STANDARDS, AND WILL LIST THE ILO LABOR CONVENTIONS THAT THE ETUC BELIEVES SHOULD BE INCLUDED IN LOME II. THE USEC LABOR ATTACHE HAS OBTAINED ON A CONFIDENTIAL BASIS TWO INTERNAL ETUC DOCUMENTS WHICH CONTAIN POSITIONS THAT THE ORGANIZATION HAS NOT YET FORMALLY ADOPTED, BUT IS CONSIDERING.

5. ONE DOCUMENT IS VERY CRITICAL OF EC COMMISSION PROPOSALS FOR INVESTMENT GUARANTEES TO EUROPEAN FIRMS DOING BUSINESS IN ACP COUNTRIES (REF D). "AS THEY STAND, THE COMMISSION'S PROPOSALS ARE UNACCEPTABLE TO THE TRADE UNION MOVEMENT," THE PAPER STATES, AND CITES CONDITIONS TO MAKE THEM ACCEPTABLE. THE MOST IMPORTANT CONDITIONS:

--"NORMS OF GOOD CONDUCT FOR HOST COUNTRIES AND INVESTORS" MUST BE ESTABLISHED TO "INCLUDE REFERENCE TO ILO FAIR LABOR STANDARDS....NO INVESTMENT GUARANTEES MUST BE GIVEN IF FAIR LABOR STANDARDS ARE BEING VIOLATED...SOMETHING OF A PRECEDENT FOR SUCH AN APPROACH WAS PROVIDED IN THE EEC CODE OF CONDUCT FOR LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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INVESTMENT IN SOUTH AFRICA; THE SAME CONCEPT, BUT WITH THE NECESSARY MEANS OF SURVEILLANCE AND SANCTION SHOULD BE ADOPTED."

--UNIONS ON THE INTERNATIONAL LEVEL MUST BE ALLOWED TO "PARTICIPATE IN THE DRAWING-UP OF INVESTMENT GUARANTEE AGREEMENTS."

6. ANOTHER DOCUMENT, TITLED "TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT," ARGUES FOR A "REFORM OF THE EXISTING SYSTEM OF INTERNATIONAL TRADE." IT MAKES THE GENERAL POINT THAT INTERNATIONAL AGREEMENTS MUST NOT PROMOTE LIBERALIZATION OF TRADE "AT THE EXPENSE OF WORKERS AND THEIR FAMILIES" (I.E., IN BOTH DEVELOPING AND DEVELOPED COUNTRIES). RATHER, "IT IS ESSENTIAL THAT TRADE IS DIRECTED TO THE IMMEDIATE BENEFIT OF THE PEOPLE AND IN PARTICULAR TOWARDS THE ACHIEVEMENT OF STRATEGIES TO CREATE EMPLOYMENT AND TO SATISFY BASIC NEEDS." A KEY SECTION OF THE DOCUMENT SAYS UNIONS OPPOSE TRADE LIBERALIZATION IF:

(A) TRADE BENEFITS ACCRUE ONLY TO A SMALL SEGMENT OF THE POPULATION, OR THE PROFITS ACCRUE TO

LARGE MULTINATIONAL COMPANIES;

(B) HUMAN AND TRADE UNION RIGHTS ARE "NOT BEING
RESPECTED IN THE PURSUIT OF TRADE POLICIES."

7. SINGLED OUT FOR SPECIAL ATTENTION IN THE DOCUMENT IS
THE "BASIC RIGHT" OF SAFETY AND HEALTH AT THE WORK PLACE.
"IT IS UNACCEPTABLE THAT GOODS AND SERVICES ARE PRODUCED
AT THE COST OF A WORKER'S LIFE OR HEALTH," THE PAPER
SAYS. INTERNATIONAL TRADE AGREEMENTS, THEREFORE, SHOULD
CONTAIN PROVISIONS TO "MAKE IT IMPOSSIBLE TO PROHIBIT THE

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IMPORTING OF GOODS PRODUCED UNDER CONDITIONS WHICH
ENDANGER WORKERS' HEALTH AND LIVES."

8. THE TRADE AND DEVELOPMENT DOCUMENT WAS MEANT PARTLY
AS A COMMENTARY ON THE COMMISSION'S EVOLVING IDEAS
REGARDING "RECIPROCAL IMPLICATIONS OF THE COMMUNITY'S
DEVELOPMENT COOPERATION POLICY AND ITS OTHER POLICIES,"
TO QUOTE THE COMMISSION'S OWN JARGON (REF A). ALONG THESE
LINES, THE PAPER URGES EC GOVERNMENTS "TO PURSUE
ADJUSTMENT POLICIES: CHANGES IN INDUSTRIAL STRUCTURES MUST
NOT BE LEFT TO THE FREE PLAY OF MARKET FORCES, SINCE IN
SUCH CASES, THE HARDSHIP SUFFERED BY THE WORKERS IN THE
DISPLACED INDUSTRIES CAN BE SEVERE, WHATEVER THE OVERALL
NATIONAL GAINS." (TEXT OF THE TWO DOCUMENTS BEING
POUCHED TO EUR/RPE:MCLEAN.)

9. ON APRIL 21, THE DAY AFTER THE MEETING OF THE ETUC SUBCOMMITTEE, ITS MEMBERS JOINED IN LARGER MEETING ON LOME II, ATTENDED BY MEMBERS OF THE WORLD CONFEDERATION OF LABOR (WCL) AND INTERNATIONAL CONFEDERATION OF FREE LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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TRADE UNIONS (ICFTU) SECRETARIATS AND BY 13 LABOR LEADERS FROM ACP COUNTRIES.

10. ORIGINALLY, THE APRIL 21 SESSION WAS TO HAVE BEEN UNDER THE JOINT AUSPICES OF THE ETUC, ICFTU, WCL, AND THE ORGANIZATION OF AFRICAN TRADE UNION UNITY (OATUU), BUT THE OATUU AS SUCH DROPPED OUT BECAUSE OF SCHEDULE CONFLICTS OF ITS GENERAL SECRETARY, DENIS AKUMU. AKUMU, BUSY WITH MEETINGS IN TUNIS AND PRAGUE, FIRST TRIED TO GET THE BRUSSELS SESSION POSTPONED, AND FAILING THAT, THEN TRIED TO DISCOURAGE ATTENDANCE, ACCORDING TO AN ICFTU SOURCE. STILL, NINE OF THE 14 AFRICANS ORIGINALLY REGISTERED DID ATTEND. (LIST OF REGISTRANTS AND PARTICIPANTS BEING POUCHED TO AF/I: SLEZAK).

11. BECAUSE OF THE ABSENCE OF AKUMU AND OTHERS, THE MEETING DID NOT ADOPT A POLICY RESOLUTION BUT APPROVED A SHORT PRESS RELEASE SUMMARIZING THE VIEWS OF THE PARTICIPANTS AND REFLECTING IN PART POINTS IN DOCUMENTS CITED ABOVE, WHICH THE PARTICIPANTS USED AS DISCUSSION PAPERS. THE REVISED LOME CONVENTION, SAID THE RELEASE, MUST:

--"MAKE REFERENCE TO ILO LABOR STANDARDS AS WELL AS OTHER BASIC RIGHTS."

--"ENTAIL THE PURSUIT NOT ONLY OF ECONOMIC BUT ALSO OF SOCIAL POLICIES AIMED AT CREATING EMPLOYMENT AND SATISFYING BASIC NEEDS."

--PERMIT TRADE UNIONS "TO PARTICIPATE FULLY IN THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE CONVENTION."

12. IN ADDITION, THE RELEASE SAID THAT "TRADE UNIONS LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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EXPECT A SUBSTANTIAL INFLUENCE IN THE PREPARATION AND NEGOTIATIONS FOR THE RENEWAL OF THE LOME CONVENTION," AND ANNOUNCED THAT THERE NOW EXISTS FOR THIS PURPOSE AN AD HOC JOINT ETUC-ICFTU-WCL-OATUU COMMITTEE. (ITS MEMBERS,

ACCORDING TO AN ETUC SOURCE, ARE SVEN-ERIK STERNER, ETUC DEPUTY GENERAL SECRETARY; ENZO FRISO, SENIOR ICFTU STAFFER; GERARD FONTENEAU, WCL ASSISTANT GENERAL SECRETARY; AND AKUMU OF THE OATUU.)

13. NOTABLY ABSENT FROM THE PRESS RELEASE WAS ANY REFERENCE TO HUMAN RIGHTS AS SUCH. WE UNDERSTAND THAT THE MORE GENERAL LANGUAGE ON RIGHTS WAS APPROVED IN DEFERENCE TO THE VIEWS OF AN ACP PARTICIPANT, L. GOODLEIGH OF THE NATIONAL WORKERS UNION OF JAMAICA, WHO REPORTEDLY ARGUED AGAINST ANY COMMENT ON "POLITICAL RIGHTS." HINTON

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